

Amendments to the Specification:

The paragraph starting at page 1, line 16, is amended and now reads as follows:

-- An exhaust-gas muffler, which is equipped with an exhaust-gas catalytic converter as needed, is affixed to any desired apparatus part of the portable handheld work apparatus with one or several attachment pins. The attachment pins can be configured as threaded fasteners, stud bolts or the like and are especially subjected to mechanical vibration loads as well as thermal loads. The attachment pins define a thermal bridge between the exhaust-gas muffler, muffler which is hot during operation and the comparatively cooler apparatus part. Temperature fluctuations in the exhaust-gas muffler, for example, because of frequently changing power outputs or starting and stopping of the engine can lead to a loosening of the attachment pins especially in combination with vibration loads resulting from the engine operation. When the apparatus part, which receives the attachment pins, is configured of a light metal, especially magnesium or a corresponding plastic material, a high heat entry via the attachment pin can lead to a creeping of the material of the apparatus in the region of the attachment pin. The creeping of the material receiving the attachment pin can, likewise, lead to an unwanted automatic loosening of the exhaust-gas muffler attachment. --

The paragraph starting at page 6, line 15, is amended and

now reads as follows:

-- In a practical further embodiment, one or both spacer means have a centering collar for the holding flange of the exhaust-gas muffler. In addition to a mechanical attachment attachment, which can be subjected to load, a precisely defined assembly position of the exhaust-gas muffler is achieved. Even with thermal or mechanical settlement, the holding flange cannot come in direct contact with the attachment pin. In this way, a good thermal insulation between the exhaust-gas muffler or its holding flange and the attachment pin is permanently ensured. --